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MEDINA SPIRIT HOLDS OFF MANDALOUN TO GIVE BAFFERT RECORD SEVENTH KENTUCKY DERBY VICTORY

LOUISVILLE, KY (Saturday, May 1, 2021) – Zedan Racing Stables' **Medina Spirit** fought back after relinquishing the lead to **Mandaloun** at midstretch to post a half-length to win the 147th running of the \$3 million Kentucky Derby presented by Woodford Reserve (GI) before a crowd of 51,838.

The victory gave trainer **Bob Baffert** his record seventh Kentucky Derby victory and rider **John Velazquez** his fourth.

Baffert broke a tie with **Ben Jones** for most Derby victories with Saturday's triumph. His previous wins came with **Silver Charm** (1997), **Real Quiet** (1998), **War Emblem** (2002), Triple Crown winner **American Pharoah** (2015), Triple Crown winner **Justify** (2018) and **Authentic** (2020).

Velazquez, who won last year on **Authentic** had previous wins on **Always Dreaming** (2017) and **Animal Kingdom** (2011). Velazquez became the eighth rider to win the Kentucky Oaks and Derby in the same year having piloted **Malathaat** to victory Friday. The most recent rider to do that was **Calvin Borel** in 2009.

Medina Spirit broke sharply from the gate but favored **Essential Quality** and second choice **Rock Your World** bumped shortly after the start eliminating some pace pressure from Velazquez.

Medina Spirit led the field through fractions of :23.09, :46.70 and 1:11.21 while under mild pressure from **Soup and Sandwich** with Mandaloun tracking in third. Approaching the far turn, **Hot Rod Charlie** began an advance along the rail while Essential Quality mounted a bid four wide.

At the head of the stretch, Medina Spirit clung to a tenuous lead over Mandaloun with Hot Rod Charlie three wide and Essential Quality four wide. **Mandaloun** briefly stuck his head in front at midstretch only to have Medina Spirit regain a lead he never yielded.

Medina Spirit covered the classic mile and a quarter distance in 2:01.02.

The victory was worth \$1,860,000 and increased Medina Spirit's earnings to \$2,175,200 with a record of 6-3-3-0.

Medina Spirit is a Florida-bred son of **Protonico** out of the **Brilliant Speed** mare **Mongolian Changa**. He was purchased by Bloodstock Agent **Gary Young** for a mere \$35,000 at the 2020 OBS Sale.

Medina Spirit returned \$26.20, \$12 and \$7.60. Mandaloun, ridden by **Florent Geroux**, returned \$23 and \$13.40 with Hot Rod Charlie finishing third another half-length back under **Flavien Prat** and paying \$5.20 to show.

Essential Quality was another head back in fourth and followed in order by **O Besos**, **Midnight Bourbon**, **Keepmeinmind**, **Helium**, **Known Agenda**, **Highly Motivated**, **Sainthood**, **Like the King**, **Bourbonic**, **Hidden Stash**, **Brooklyn Strong**, **Super Stock**, **Rock Your World**, **Dynamic One** and **Soup and Sandwich**.

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